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DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

COUNTERTERRORIST CENTER

# TERRORISM REVIEW

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## Terrorism Review

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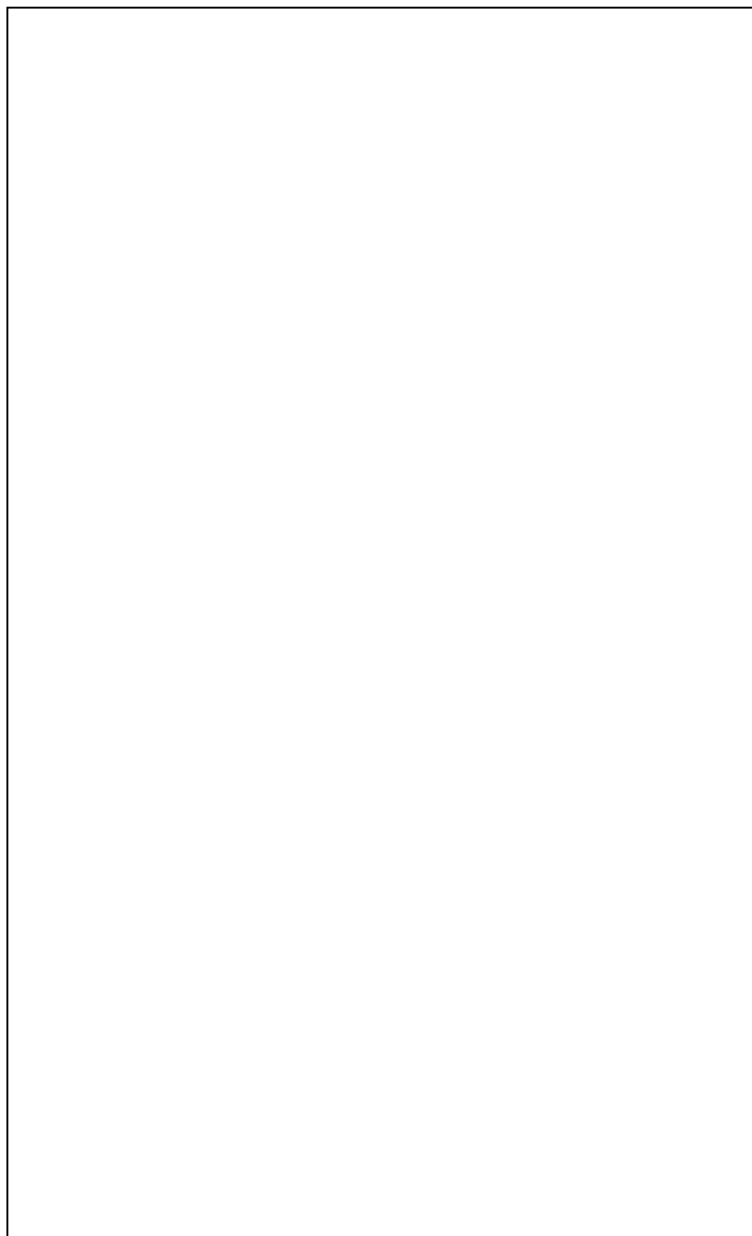
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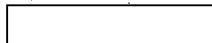
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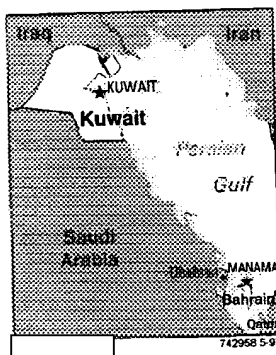
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**Highlights** [ ]**Significant Developments****Middle East****Kuwait-Bahrain****Bahraini Hizballah Still Active?** [ ]

The Kuwaiti State Security Service (KSS) arrested 13 Bahraini nationals and two Iraqis in Kuwait City on 26 March for representing a security threat to Kuwaiti interests. [ ] These arrests may indicate that Bahraini Hizballah still is active in the Persian Gulf region despite last year's crackdown and the recent trial of 59 of the group's members in Bahrain. There is some evidence that those arrested may be affiliated with Hizballah cells in the region or with Iran:

- Kuwaiti officials reported to Bahraini officials that the group appeared to have ties to Saudi and Kuwaiti Hizballah. [ ] Manama press reported that the group called itself "Hizballah Gulf."

[ ] correspondence found at the homes of those arrested indicates they had contacts in Damascus, Syria, and Qom, Iran, and the service suggests they may have been operating on behalf of the Iranian Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS). [ ]

Although the Bahraini Government's crackdown last year appeared to have disabled Bahraini Hizballah, several key leaders—including three military council members—avoided capture and may be attempting to regroup and conduct Hizballah-related activities:

- Muhammad Habib Mansur Saffaf, one of the group's top leaders, lives in Kuwait City. [ ] He reportedly has run a safe-house in Kuwait that served as key transit point between Bahrain and Lebanon, has engaged in weapons smuggling, and may still be involved in terrorist-related activities that have aroused Kuwaiti suspicions. Kuwaiti officials may try to capture Saffaf in connection with the recent arrests.
- Various reports suggest military council member Adil Shu'ala, who is still free outside Bahrain, may be associated with Hizballah al-Hijaz, the group suspected in the bombing in June 1996 of Khubar Towers in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.
- Bahraini officials estimate that 37 other known Bahraini Hizballah members also still are free and probably have fled to Iran or Lebanon. [ ]

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If the Bahrainis arrested in Kuwait are affiliated with Bahraini Hizballah, it would be the first indication that the group still is active. The possible ties to Iran and references to the new name "Hizballah Gulf" suggest Tehran may be working to create a new Hizballah cell to oppose the Bahraini Government. [redacted]

[redacted] those arrested in Kuwait were raising money to send to Bahrain.

Recent contacts between Lebanese Hizballah and Bahraini Shias suggest that Bahraini Hizballah retains an infrastructure in Bahrain as well. Lebanese Hizballah leader Fadlallah cooperates with Bahraini Shia cleric Abdallah 'Asfur, who, as recently as April, solicited Fadlallah's ideas on how they might work together, [redacted] 'Asfur reportedly is a moderate Shia cleric, who has cooperated with the Bahraini Government in the past. Though the association of Fadlallah and Asfur may be related to legitimate religious affairs, their contact, at a minimum, indicates Fadlallah has access to the Shia community in Bahrain.

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